

Halida Dinova to play “Great Piano Miniatures” at St. James in Lakewood April 14

by Daniel Hathaway



Cleveland-based pianist Halida Dinova, a prizewinner in several international competitions who has made acclaimed recordings on the Doremi, Naxos, Navona, Chandos, and Cantius Classics labels, will be presenting her solo program “Great Piano Miniatures” for piano lovers of all ages and listening experiences at Lakewood’s St. James Catholic Church on Sunday, April 14 at 4:00 pm.

The works on the program span centuries of music history, “telling a story of adventure and deep emotions” in two 35-minute segments.

Dinova will perform works by Bach, Scarlatti, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schubert, Chopin,

Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff, Scriabin, and Brahms ending with Franz Liszt’s *Legend No. 2*, “a rare sound picture of St. Francis of Paola crossing the Straits of Messina by walking on the water” that was inspired by a painting in the Vatican.

I reached Halida Dinova by telephone and began by asking if she had ever programmed a recital of all miniature pieces before?

Halida Dinova: Yes. Not this selection, but I worked for 13 years for the Entertainment Corporation, which supplies classical music to international conferences like National Geographic, investment seminars, and charter ships where I was the only entertainer.

Big sonatas are not so suitable for that type of situation, so the format was always 50 minutes of music, no more.

DH: How did this program happen at St. James?

HD: Because of James Flood, the music director.. I teach in his music school in Westlake, and he asked me to consider playing in St. James. It’s a beautiful church that’s

in need of some maintenance. We need to bring audiences there and show them how beautiful the place is. It's an absolutely marvelous architectural gem.

DH: How do you think the piano works in an acoustic like that?

HD: The acoustic is typical of a huge church. It's a very big space to fill. The piano is a good quality, a Hardman, a New York brand that's unknown to me. I came there with Brian Wilson, who examined it thoroughly and said, yes, it's possible to do a recital on this instrument. Maybe with the means of such concerts, we can raise some funds like I did for St. Sergius Russian Orthodox Church in Tremont.

Dinova completed a Post-Graduate Performance Course in Piano at the Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatory in St. Petersburg, where she studied with Anatol Ugorski. Previously, she had earned a Masters degree in her home city of Kazan, where she studied at the Nazib Zhiganov Conservatory under Natalia Fomina.

She earned an Artist Diploma from the Cleveland Institute of Music in piano performance as a student of Paul Schenly. In 2018 she defended her Ph.D. dissertation "The Piano in the Works of Ernest Bloch" at the Kazan State Conservatory/Mosco, earning the Ph.D in musicology.

She has taught at Cleveland State University and at various private music schools in Ohio. Dinova currently teaches in her home studio in Cleveland Hts. as well as at the Westlake Music Academy.

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